

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PALM DESERT  
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

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KEEDY, BARBARA

Interviewed by

Patricia Young

Feburary 28,1980



INTERVIEWEE: BARBARA KEEDY

INTERVIEWER: Patricia Young

SUBJECT:

DATE: 28 February 1980

TRANSCRIBER: Linda A. Jantzen

PY: This is an interview with Barbara Keedy for the Historical Society of Palm Desert Oral History Project by Patricia Young on February 28, 1980, Thursday, at four-thirty in the afternoon at her home at 45205 Panorama Drive in Palm Desert.

I think that the first thing we want to discuss today is what it was like growing up in Palm Desert, what your first memories are.

BK: Oh, it's sort of hard going back to what you really remember as a memory, or what you think you remember from hearing, you know, through the years. I remember not a lot of kids. It was sort of like living in the country with no farm animals kind of thing. (chuckle) Because you didn't have that, it was out in the middle of nowhere. And you sort of entertained yourselves.



And I had a brother, so we played, I assume, an awful lot together, as much as I can remember. I'm not totally knowing exactly what I did all through the time, you know, knowing what I did and/didn't do. Part of it with the flooding and stuff we've had here, I do remember the first flood we had when we'd taken my brother to get a haircut and came back and it flooded. And I remember like things of walking to the post office because they were, I mean not to the post office, but to the post office boxes that were like rural boxes all on a clump on the highway. And a lot of kids were here but you kind of played because it was so far between each other's houses. You didn't walk to each other's house. Either your parents went over there for dinner and so you played or somebody brought somebody else's kids or you went with your parents more than kids getting together themselves, until you got a lot older. And then about that time, they built Shadow Mountain Club which we all spent, well, weekends sometime in the nice weather, but through the school year not too much. But then when the first day of school was out until the day before it went back, all day and all night until, you know, the club was open I think like nine to ten or eleven at night. Then they had lifeguards and that's where everybody went. And before that, they had a pool in Palm Desert. And I just vaguely



remember being there and still, you know, seeing the pictures and things now, you know, being there and swimming with the kids and the birthday parties. And I sort of don't remember totally, but just from being told of my birthday party, must have been five, I guess, at the old Palm Village Inn, which is now Sunshine. Yes, Sunshine, you know that. And I don't know, I can't see there is any, you know, we didn't have any problems growing up because we didn't have anything to have problems with. Then it was for the age of, you know, the problems of growing up today. And you just didn't have that. And nobody, you didn't have the people with a lot of money or little money. Everybody was the same because the war was just over and everybody was here trying to make a different kind of life. And because there just wasn't that much. I think there were like eleven houses when we first, you know, were here. And I think growing up was good because you weren't in the city. I think maybe it didn't prepare you later on to move to the city because you'd never put up with traffic or people. And you knew everybody, and everybody knew you. That would probably be the only disadvantage because kids could never do anything because, you know, everybody knew whose kids you



were that was out there getting into trouble. Started off going to school, the grade schools in Palm Desert, and remember a lot of our classes were together because they didn't have enough students. I remember kindergarten was alone, just kindergarten age. Then like in first and second grade, we were mixed together. But I remember third grade was separated. And fourth grade was with the fifth graders. Then fifth grade was alone. It seemed to be every other year, then sixth grade we were alone. Then we went to Jefferson in Indio for two years. And then they built the high school. And must have been fall of fifty-eight to go to school there. And there were quite a few kids here and we all spent all our time at Shadow Mountain Club, just because it was really the only thing to do. And the dues and stuff were reasonable enough for all the parents who were here. I don't remember now what they were, but it seems to me it must not have been an awful lot to do. And they had supervised activities. And then they had that Lou <sup>Kuehner</sup> Keener had, different age groups. And the only name I can remember is the Cactus Cats, but they were all desert things. And as you progressed from like seven and eight to ten and eleven and twelve or whatever, and that was like on Friday nights



it was dinner and dancing, you know. Where the boys had to ask the girls, and you learned what spoon you were going to use with what kind of soup. And if you were going to have fish or whatever and it was sort of a fun way to learn etiquette. I guess that's about the best way to put that. And you learned things, and then on Saturdays there was activities for particular season or swimming shows. And then later on when it had an outdoor screen, it had the movies. And although they had a lot more things at the club, you know, the snack bar and the tennis. But they had big slides and the pool. And if you were bad, you had to pick up the towels all the time. So it was always going to see who had to pick up the towels at the end of the day because you never wanted to do that. Then your mother and father would know you were late because you didn't get home because you had to pick up the towels. And you got to know the people. There were a lot of kids, a lot of people who grew up here left and have stayed away having never set foot here again. But a lot of people through the years went away and then have come back. And they always thought, well, they hated it here because there was nothing to do and this and that, but they went away to



the big cities and decided they didn't like that either. That they weren't used to that. We had a lot of celebrity kids that you grew up and you knew. But at the time we were too young to know that they were celebrity kids. It didn't make any difference to anybody. And nobody cared and nobody knew any better. Of the people that were here. Because there was only place for everybody to be and that's where everybody was. You know, regardless of whether your parents had money or <sup>they</sup> didn't or, you know, you went to school ~~where they~~ did or wherever. And they had a lot of, tried to have a fair amount of youth activities. Then they started when we all, when we had the church, community church up by the stables, up which is now like Silver Spur. And lot of youth organizations on Saturday and, you know, singing in the choir. And then activities for maybe non-religious holidays, but because the holidays, because it was at least where everybody was. And it was only the community church unless you were Catholic and went to Indio or Palm Springs. Everybody just sort of was community church people, just as an alternative to anything else unless you were, you know, went into one of the other areas. And then we started after we got older and went to COD, and that was the first year because



we sort of started, I was in the first year that they opened Palm Desert School, and it was called George Washington then. And then in Indio High School, and that was the first year, and then the college the first year they opened that. Then on the summer between being a senior in high school and in college there were two students from each high school that contributed into the college district that worked on a committee for like colors and constitution and the mascot for the college. And like the student organization that was going to go on at the college because they had the faculty and some of the administration here for a couple of years before it opened. But then they got the students involved with what was going to go on. And I know at the first year there, even though it was just a one-year, started off with one major year of freshmen, they had like three people graduated, it was their second year, that first year. And then went on from there. And there was a lot of cement and dirt (chuckle) when we first went to school there. And it was interesting. A lot of the kids, the kids were all fun and a lot of them, through the years, have all gone other places and most of them now, we just barely keep track unless the parents, you know, kept



track of each other, the kids really didn't unless it was just somebody particular. Like I have one girl-friend that we've always been very, very close ever since, you know, growing up. And one of the boys, well, two of the boys, one's a contractor here and one's a teacher at the college that were here all in those early days. And you also got a few people that were like in the outlying areas which is like Indian Wells and on a little bit going into Indio. And some Rancho Mirage and Cathedral City, there were a few people that came into this as the nucleus because there wasn't that much going on where they were. The cities were more established, but either the parents worked here or were friends with the people who lived here, so they were here, too.

PY: When you say a nucleus, what did you mean, just if the social community is here or COD?

BK: No, the social community here in the earlier years, then COD. And COD had a big drawing when it first opened because it was the first, really the, just the beginnings of any college education here, be it any of the classes for many of the others to universities and stuff. There was no place for them to meet here at all. Now there may have been some of that, but I was always too young to,



you know, to pay attention to what was going on for college age students. Up until COD everybody went away. When you got out of high school, you either got married or you went away to college because there was no choice on that. And a lot of kids went away and then came back. And then maybe did whatever they did, got married or worked for awhile. And then maybe went away again to finish college because everybody was kind of young. And you're just not growing up with the problems or the situations of living someplace else. And here they go away. I know girls always had a problem. You'd go away and you'd meet a guy, but nobody ever knew him, you know, And you were always thinking about, well, you at least knew him here or your brother ran around with him or, you know, your older sister knew his brother or something, so it was always a little, it was a little safer, I guess maybe is the word. Because you knew them or somebody knew who you were with or where you were. And I think that was sort of an advantage in a way, in certain respects, and in other ones it wasn't at all. You know, people were keeping track of where you were and what you were doing and who you were with until what time.

PY: And I think that goes on.



BK: Yes, I think it, you know, regardless. So I don't know.

I go back over any particular areas of just time . . .

PY: Well, you mentioned some things we could go back over.

BK: Okay. That's sort of a like from then until now, and then sort of go back into some . . . This school, I remember, like at the school, we had Monte Montana used to come all of the time and give horse shows. And you used to have to go sit out there in the heat and watch his horse and all this stuff. Then we had May dances. We had a Maypole dance every year. And it was the sixth graders who were in it, and then some of the other people were like in the court. And they had a king and queen. Then you had a May dance and you wrapped the Maypole. And that was, those were kind of like really the school activities that everybody was into. Plus a few field trips, but I couldn't tell you where or why that I remember going to. And a lot of the activities was at the school ground because it was only the, like swings and gym bars and monkey bars and things there because it was the only kind of like equipment kind of stuff for outdoor activity that there was. And the school grounds was totally open all the time. They weren't fenced in or anything, so you could be there if you wanted to. And then we went to Indio to school. And that was seventh and eighth grade.



And then that was really the first time that we met kids that we hadn't known for all the years before because people from Indio came into that school system. All the outlying or the area around Indio fed into that school as well as Palm Desert. So that was really the first time that you met an awful lot of tremendous amount of new people that you hadn't known. And like our back then it was a big thing for an eighth grade graduation we had our eighth grade graduation at the, on the stage at the fairgrounds. And it was the first time because it was that far along. It was the first time you had a long dress and, you know, got your first pair of heels and could wear makeup. Going back just in the growing up days. Then we went to Indio High School and there was none of the problem you knew the kids then by then. You'd established friends after two years of being in school with them. And so that went on, and then went on to the football and on the school activities. I did, they had the girls, like girls drill team in school. It's like your P.E. requirement. And we marched in the parades and did all the half-time activities for the football games. And went along then, I was Miss Posture my junior year. They had, in the June class, they had a contest,



I don't know how or why it got started at the time. But it's people who were supposedly, you know, stood up straight and carried themselves well and did all this bit. Because we used to have to, you know, stand up straight and in a class and all. It was back just a little bit different. Teachers cared about what you did and what you looked like. And how you acted and how you dressed. We had a dress code. You couldn't wear pants to high school or to college until, oh, gee, they finally changed the dress code at the college after, I think, about the first couple of years. It had just come because the president of the college at that time had been in northern California and was very staunch, exacting kind of person who said you will have a dress code. And then it just got to be you just couldn't enforce it in junior college and people being a little more freer wearing pants and this and that. And you just couldn't tell women they couldn't wear pants. And we rode the buses to Indio. I remember we used to go, always had to go to the bus stop all the time. And everybody was always, you know, hassling. And had to get up early, I remember, because we had so far to go. And we had Brownies here and Cub Scouts, and then Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts all, just about all through



the years. And there were usually a troop in Palm Desert that somebody in Palm Desert had, so that you didn't have to go to Indio or whatever because it was just more convenient on the parents for doing that. And I remember the Brownies used to have to go, you know, on their little outings and build little campfires and all those little fun things that everybody has to do. And then going on and being a Girl Scout and selling Girl Scout cookies. And I guess my brother was a Cub Scout, I guess he was, too. I guess he was. I don't think he ever went up as a Boy Scout, but he was a Cub Scout. I think he probably flunked out. And I don't know, well, let's see. Still see some of the people that were here. A lot of them you don't see. And I have no idea, you know, where they are. A lot of the kids went on and did things with their lives of, you know, quite a few doctors and lawyers and people out of the area. But because you lose contact with them, you don't totally know what everybody's really done. A lot of the times you wish you really had kept track with people that you were so close with, but everybody's lives just went in so many different directions. Mainly after they went away to college, that you just don't unless you see their parents or something



now. And to find out because a lot of the parents are here. And then a lot of people retired out of the area when they left and their kids were gone and their families were gone from here, the parents left also to go away. So that kind of changed the picture. And then the parents that are still here, you still see the people every once in a while. There were a lot of people like there was Kathy Malone and Jerry Malone, Jr. was here. And there was the three Andrew sisters (laughter) that were here and their dad had the market in Palm Desert. And Paul Bowie who was a teacher at the college. And Gary Olson whose parents had the Imperial Motors was here. And Ken Roberts who still lives in Palm Desert. And Bill Marrow, Bill and Brenda, Buda was her name, Marrow, were here around a lot in the club. And a lot of the people that you got to know, they were older than I were, and they were at the club. And we had all the activities there. And after you learned how to pick up towels and you got to be lifeguard. And they had Lou <sup>Kuehner</sup> Keener was at the club for a long lot of years. And he taught, oh, tumbling when we were there on the weekend things. He always taught tumbling. I was always a klutz. And do that. And then they hired Betty Crockett, which is still around. And they were, I think,



probably, other than your parents, I think they were probably the most two influential people on anybody who grew up here. And I think everybody's parents can be very, very fortunate that they had such a good influence on the kids because they didn't put up with anything from anybody, but yet you could still be a kid. If you made a mess when in the fingerprinting class, that was fine. That's where you were supposed to make a mess. But, you know, you had rules and regulations and you lived by them. And you didn't think about not following the rules. There was no other choice. You never had an option, really, and you just did it. And it wasn't because you had to or you, kind of because you wanted to more than anything, I think. That people did that. And I think it was good. I think it was good growing up here. I can't say, you know, the weather and people say, how can you stand to live there in the heat? It's because we had the weather all the year round, that it never bothered us. And we lived for the first seventeen years without even air conditioning. It was just a water cooler, which everybody really did. But the weather was different and there wasn't that many people and there wasn't that much vegetation. There wasn't the problems. And if you had a few humid days, you know, they



went away and not like we have now. And, I mean the population and the golf courses and the foliage and the building have all brought that, plus I think a change in the weather. But I guess as little kids you didn't pay that much attention to it. By the time it was tired at night, you were tired. You went to asleep. You didn't worry about how humid it was sleeping in the house. And let's see, well, do you want to stop just for a second? And go back, or do you have any questions?

PY: Oh, I've got tons of things here.

BK: All right.

PY: We can talk about. I was just curious, you were saying so much of the activity was around Shadow Mountain Club with Lou <sup>Kuehner</sup> Keener and Betty Crockett. Were the same kids involved with the activities or with the community church? Were there people over there that were as influential as Lou and Betty?

BK: Yes, but I remember the first man because he was what everybody's stereotype of a lovely grandfather was, an older man named Dr. Baker was with the church. And I kind of remember that just because you remember him, but I don't really remember the activities. I remember more when we had a minister and his name was Reverend McClain



came out. And he was very young and the most gorgeous man. Any of us that ever seen as girls and we were all just going, I mean he, we didn't care what he had to say or what he was pushing, it was fine with us, you know, kind of attitude. Because he was just ah, so that was a little bit older. That was probably about, oh, I don't know, twelve or thirteen to about sixteen, I guess. So we were very impressionable at that age. To go on with the activities there. But probably seventy-five or eighty percent of the activities were at the club. And it was just the swimming and the water shows. And then they had diving exhibitions. They had people, and I can't even remember, but a tremendous list when diving, a very important and very famous diving people came and gave diving exhibitions and they had water shows. And we were at the club, the girls, well, and some of the boys, too, did like <sup>aquatics</sup> aqueanas and water ballets and things in the pool at the club for the particular activity. And they had a lot of barbecues and played tennis. I didn't happen to play tennis, neither did my parents. My brother did. Then there was a lot of tennis centered activities there, too. And at the club you could have a charge account. Your parents could have charge accounts. So either you



had your money, but you'd always just charge your lunch for, you know, a hamburger for a quarter kind of thing. So that made it easy and it was free to get into the club if you were a member, but I think it cost you, I guess, one towel was free, and you had that. And then you took your stuff or you could have your lunch. And there was dressing rooms. You could change and shower at the club. And then the big dining room. They filmed, I remember *no I don't know* young teenagers, there was a kid here who was, had aspirations of being a movie star and they filmed a couple of movies at the Shadow Mountain Club. And there's still a couple of old, real old, Joan Crawford movies around that have a lot of Shadow Mountain Club in the background. And the kid's name, what was his name? Oh, Archie Hall. And he did a couple of real winning B-movies like, you know, "The Monster in the Desert," and you could still, every once in awhile you can see them on late night television that had things from Shadow Mountain. That was all neat to sit in the background in the movie. You couldn't say anything, but you could sit in the background while they were filming this movie and all the people that were around. They had a lot of celebrities that did things at the club and different



activities. And they raised a lot of the, if they raised any money for anything, it was always a total community activity, you know. Kids and parents and everybody because it was staying, you know, within their community. I remember when they like decided to buy, get a fire truck for the area. That they had big dinners and things to raise money, and the kids did just as much as the parents, you know. You could still serve food or help do what needed to be done in an activity at the club.

PY: You said some of the kids came back. Do you remember who of those came back?

BK: Not really. Most of the ones, I guess, are because now I'm more conscious of the ones when they're like Paul Bowie went to high school. And now he was older so he went to CV. And then went away and got his teaching credential and then came back here to live. And teachers at the college. Now like Gary Olson, I knew Gary must have gone away to college somewhere sometime, and he's here. And he's pretty much always been here. Now I've always been here. Ken Roberts probably went away to college and came back. And Bill Marrow is still here, and I don't know whether he went away or not. And, oh, there was Joyce Shope was here and Pam Peck was one of



young, about my age, and her parents had the ~~a~~ adobe at the eaves, an adobe lodge, but it had a dining room, I think, and a bar. And then they moved to Hawaii and her dad opened and it's now Peck's of Hawaii jewelry store. And she was here. And I saw her when I went to Hawaii the first year. I hadn't seen her in about probably fifteen years, and I called her and went to see her.

Maggie Douglas lived here quite a bit when we went through high school. And her father was Paul Douglas, the actor. And her mother was Virginia Fields. And Maggie was here all through the high school years. And then Jackie Andrews that's my age that I still am very close friends with. And she had two older sisters, Wynette and Karen, that lived <sup>here</sup> all through those years. They probably were here. We'd always get in arguments about who was here the oldest, the longest. And that was just a little bit, because I think her older sisters are about five or six or seven years older than we are. So that was a whole different thing for them of what they were doing because they went to CV in those years when we were still practically in grade school and in high school they were there, so it was a different level of activity for them. And things like you'd dance in the pageant if you



had any dancing ability in this and that when you were in high school. You had to be in high school. And they didn't have a Miss Palm Desert. It was always Indio, which none of us ever qualified for because you lived out here. And you went to Palm Springs because there was no movie or anything, but most of the Palm Desert people did most of what they did towards Indio, except some people went to Palm Springs. You went to Palm Springs to the movie. And they used to have a theatre in the round when we were real young in Palm Springs. And we used to do that so our parents would think we had a little bit of culture. And they had police shows in Palm Springs. That was always what you got tickets to go to the police show because it was people like Bing Crosby, Red Skelton mainly. I remember Red Skelton the most, and going comedians and things at the police shows. And then like Lou and Betty used to take us on the hiking trails up to Tahquitz Canyon. That's when you could still get into Tahquitz Canyon. So you got all the outdoor activity as well as the indoor stuff pretty much. I'm trying to think of more kids.

PY: Do you remember any of the memories that the older kids had at Coachella. It seemed to me there were differences



in your experiences at Indio High School.

BK: Not really. It just seemed to me probably never come up in conversation. And probably Ken Roberts could probably, you know, be one of the best ones. He was just a couple of years older than I am. And then the two Andrew sisters that lived out here. And they just ran around because they were just, you know, they wouldn't dare drag their little sisters and their friends with them anywhere they went. And theirs was a whole different kind of plateau than what ours was then. And they pretty much were not involved in what we were doing. It was usually my age, and then a few of the kids that were younger, but it was just that much difference between being twelve and being seventeen. Or being ten and fifteen kind of thing. It was about a five-year span so that they just didn't, you know, they didn't run around with us and didn't do what we did because we were little kids to them, you know. So on that, not really.

PY: But that's interesting that you would even run around with kids that were slightly younger than you. I know where I went to school, you only ran around with kids your own age because there were lots of kids.

BK: Yes. Yes. I think part of that, that it sort of showed



up in Indio High School when I went to my ten-year high school reunion. You knew practically everybody there because when we went to Indio when we were freshmen we were the only class. Then we moved up, so there was a class behind us. So we were like, in essence, seniors for four years. So as far as dating, you either dated somebody in your class if you were a girl or the Indio girls dated guys from CV because they may have grown up with them more in that area than Indio. Because they didn't want to transfer the kids out of CV once they'd started there. So there was a lot of people that were the same age, but just because of where they lived in Indio, it decided which school they went to. But in the guys in my class dated girls in the class behind us. So when you went to the reunion you knew almost everybody there. Only the few, the handful, who had married when they went to college and went away. And so you kind of knew everybody there because of that. It was sort of, you know, it was just there. Those were the people you ran around with. So that's where most of them, the marriages and things took place. It was with people that you knew.

PY: I think that's common anywhere you live.



BK: Yes.

PY: Any impressions of the teachers there in Indio High School?

BK: No, only the one lady who used to wear two different shoes. Because right fit of one pair and the left one fit of the other. And the teacher who used to smack you on the hand with a ruler because that was still allowed then. And nothing. Most of the high school was fact of the guys that, you know, you're always, always got your sweaters so you could ask to wear their letterman's jacket. And graduation. And just building a school because you knew all the teachers and all the teachers knew you because it was just a close-knit group of people for about the first couple of years. And like our sports teams didn't do anything because the school was so little. Even in our freshman and sophomore years, we had to play like junior varsity sports. But, and then when we went on, like when we were juniors, we had no seniors to help be on the team. And then finally when we were seniors, we did go further into like sports championships because the guys had been playing together like for four years together. And they knew how each other, you know, moved and breathed practically on that.



No, I guess because you didn't pay attention to what was going on in high school really. You know, you got through your life and you did what you were doing and you studied, and you never paid too much attention to, you know, to the teachers. A lot of the teachers are still there. A lot of kids that we went to high school with are back teaching in a deal now. Or, well, three that I can think of. And Carolyn Fisher was our girls dean at the high school who is back now at the college. And I can't think of anybody else really that we knew there that is, you know, still back here or still, you know, very impressionable as far as that. We had a great looking geometry teacher and everybody took geometry.

PY: Did you find that you hung out more in Indio because you were going to school there, or did you actually really stay around here in terms of activities once you went to junior high and high school there?

BK: A lot of it was school activities. It was probably a little bit of both. I know like school because that was when money for education wasn't as bad. And they always had an activity bus that if you stayed after school for like, we had girls GAA, Girls' Athletic



Association. Yes. You stayed after school for that. Or we used to have progressive dinners in Indio from one house to another like, you know, appetizer and then spaghetti and then bread and dessert and stuff at somebody's house. That was all that ~~he~~ knew because of the closeness of having that. Plus then the activity bus brought you home so a lot of the after-school activities were all in Indio. Or you were there for a, basketball games were in the afternoon or something. And then you had dances that were all kind of the school activity level there. But you still, probably during the week you were in Indio doing your activities on the weekends out here that you didn't go because nobody had cars. You know, everybody was too young and plus you just didn't go. Your parents just didn't take you to Indio to play for the afternoon kind of thing. And so it was probably the school activities. And a lot of parents, I remember my parents both worked, so they were working usually, you know, when you got home from school. So you had that activity bus to get you home, and then by that time it was dinner and time to study and, you know, go to bed. And mostly like the school dances and stuff were always in the gym. And then the



junior-senior prom was the Indio Woman's Club. That was real fun. And I guess a lot of the activities were there. You always, you know, if you stayed after school and we used to have at Jefferson, and at the high school, maybe, open lunch hours that you could leave campus during lunch and go downtown and eat. And because you just didn't have the problems with the kids that you do now. And I remember that because I remember my mother wouldn't let me go off campus for a long time until -- finally one of the girls, you know, we finally convinced her it was okay to go off campus at lunch. And so we had, a lot of our activities, you know, were there. And a lot of them were built around the fact that it was a small community of, I mean, school community of the teachers. And all the teachers had to be at the activities. And all the students went to the activities because there wasn't an awful lot else to do, you know. You didn't have cars. You could go to the Aladdin Theatre to the movie and that was about it. If there wasn't a school dance or an activity. I remember my first rock and roll concert of the era was at the Indio Armory to see the Beach Boys. And we must have been probably sophomores or juniors in high school when that went on.



And that was our big thing. Oh, that was, you know, the world was going to come to an end because we were old enough to go to a rock concert then. You know, and there was absolutely nothing wrong with it because it wasn't, you know, any of the problems and stuff now. And that was sort of an age thing. And the kids kind of came and went, you know, out of school. And because part of it being a little bit of a resort then, a lot of kids came and went. Some people felt it was hard to make friends because you'd just make them and then they would move. Or they'd only be here just for one year, and then their parents would go someplace else because it was, I assume now that it must have been hard adjustment for people to live here who had lived someplace else because of the lack of this and that to do. That they, you know, and jobs, there's still even today, there are not that many jobs available. And you're talking about, you know, our parents being young at the time. They either had to have some kind of a job working for someone else or the few who owned their own businesses, but most of them at that day and age didn't, you know, have enough money just to be here. That they were all working parents. So the people who lived here who moved here



from the other cities and things found it hard, I think, to cope with nothing to do. And kids being around the house an awful lot more than in normal where you could, you know, send them to the park or down the street or something, so that was kind of different.

PY: Was your graduation more elaborate because you were the first class in Indio?

BK: No. No, it was just on the football field at the high school. But I don't remember it being anything more than anything that they've ever done, you know, before or since on that at all. I remember they did because that was before <sup>they had</sup> Disneyland for graduations, you know, in so many places. And we had a movie. We got to go to the Aladdin Theatre for a movie. And I guess we had a dance afterwards. Then the Aladdin Theatre for the movie. And then a breakfast someplace kind of, but I don't think everybody ever went to the breakfast. They never got that far. And, but I don't think they really did too much. I can't even remember who was graduation speaker or anything else, you know, at the time.

PY: How about COD? Was that special because the classes were small?

BK: Yes and no. I don't really remember too much about that.



I know that there were three students the first year who had had, you know, their units to be like a sophomore. Then the following year was sort of like the first kind of big graduation. But it still wasn't really big because there still weren't that many people here. And COD got to be known very fast as a fun school. It was written up in Playboy about the second or third year it was open as one of the top fun schools in California, because it was the ideal climate, the ideal weather. Plus you had all the rich kids who said, well, you know, they played in Palm Springs during Easter weeks and why not go to college there. So that had a big drawing of people who really didn't want to study. They just came out here to sit in the sunshine and, you know, maybe go to class. You know, play tennis and play golf kind of thing. Plus the kids who really were here and the ones who wanted to study, but plus the ones who really, you know, didn't. Or they had a grandmother living here or an aunt living here or something, so they came down and stayed with them to go to college. And COD has always had, has always been an apathetic school. You couldn't get ten people there interested in doing anything at the same time. It was a lot better earlier in the



college because you did know everybody and you knew the teachers. And it was more fun, I think. But part of it, I'm going back of getting out of the, kids and student government and we keep telling them the only thing that's changed is their faces. They still have the same problems and still, you know, can't get anybody. You know, they have a school dance and three people show up. And I think there were more because there was less to do then. And you didn't have the drugs and the booze and this and that going on.. There was other outlets for students then. What was around was just always kept basically quiet because it just wasn't as open as anything is now. And you used to go to Palm Springs in Easter week. And you would cruise that Palm Canyon. That was the big thing to do, you know, which everybody did. And go up to Tahquitz Falls or go to parties or, you know, go try and see Elvis Presley or somebody when they were in town. And but you've kind of grown up with a lot of those people. And a lot of people, you didn't run around too much, you did and you didn't. And I don't know if it's a reason or whether you think it's a reason now, but most of the kids in Palm Springs all had more money or seemed to.



Took out was the people that were there, you know. They always kind of stayed together. The Palm Springs kids were always very cliquish unless you were dating a guy or something from Palm Springs was the only way you really got sort of accepted in their group. Plus they'd all gone to school together for so many years of grade school, junior high and high school, that there just weren't outsiders per se in their group. And it was the same with ours. There was huge rivalry between Indio and CV, and then also with Indio and Palm Springs as far as high school activities were concerned.

PY: Can't remember what I was going to . . . And that continued on at COD even once people had graduated and were going out to COD they still, there was the Palm Springs group as opposed to the . . .

BK: Yes, a little bit, you know. I remember when I started dating, oh geez, I mean not starting dating, but when I was dating. I started dating a guy from Palm Springs. And then that's when I really started to get to know the Palm Springs kids and the activities. And then my whole sort of life switched to Palm Springs activities way more than in the Indio activities. Plus everybody from Indio kind of, our high school group kind of went on. You



either went to the college or most people went away probably I'd say out of the school or they went to work and just your ideas and your whole lifestyle changed. So then I just happened to start to get to know the people from Palm Springs. You'd known them before, but not as well. And then we started going to classes with them, and your activities were there. Plus there was an awful lot of college parties, you know, starting off because it was still a wide-open area. And you could go out in some of these outlying areas and have a party. And you'd party for three days before anybody would catch you. And not that many people had cars. And you used to park them all around the whole neighborhood so that you didn't have parties, you know. Well, I mean, plus you knew the sheriffs, you know. Most of the people you'd either gone to school with them or you knew their younger brother or something, and they were really good. The local kids didn't cause trouble to them, and then they were good to the local kids. You know, if you were local, you never really got busted, you know, for cruising Palm Springs or in Easter week or anything. And if there was a big party and the police came, if you had a local drivers license or I.D. or something, they



really didn't give you as bad a time as they did, you know, some of the kids, the kids from out of town because they knew that the kids here were really basically, you know, good kids. They knew there were problem kids, too, but they didn't bother you too much. It was always sort of felt a safe, secure feeling if you knew if you were someplace you shouldn't at a party that if you were local you probably wouldn't have to call your parents and tell them to come get you. And so that was good, you know, from that standpoint, too.

PY: I assume that everyone around Palm Desert was white. Was there a huge Hispanic population at Indio High School when you were going there?

BK: No. No, I'd say probably in the minority because you're talking about Indio being divided as any city can with a certain portion of Indio and lower Indio and Mecca and Thermal and Coachella all going to CV High School. And like Indio, I don't remember where the dividing line was, I think it was Jackson, so like the better part of Indio probably were the kids who went to Indio High School. And we had, I think we only had like two black families in Palm Desert through the years growing up. And, well, I don't know, I can't say quite a few families,



Mexican families, because their parents worked in the ranches. You were getting into a lot of the labor force which was of interMexican families who went to school, who worked here on the big ranches and stuff and ran *them*. There was the Montoyas, which a lot of the Montoyas kids and families and brothers and sisters and things. And Contreras, Danny and Cele Contreras, are here. And it's sort of hard to go back and think of the people that were here.

TAPE 1, SIDE 2:

BK: It probably was. I don't know. You know, it would be hard to go back to see a few of these pictures shook loose around here.

PY: Is that of Jefferson High School?

BK: No, it's in Indio

PY: Well, that's narrow.

BK: Well, yes, see, it was just one class. Yes. June 1959, so we started there in September. I was trying to see if any of these people shook a bell, of people that lived out here, what I was trying to do. Yes, Joyce Shope was here and Kathy Malone and, oh, Mona Harrison. Oh, and then Yvonne LaDell whose father was Randall Henderson was



here and her kids. But Randy, her son, is two or three years younger than I am, and then her daughter was my brother's age. And so that was just a little bit different, too. I remember Leroy Meyers whose father had something to do with the post office that I remember very much was here. And then John Vallat who lived in, well, like Rancho Mirage. But on the dividing line, let me try to think, it still is for Indio and Palm Springs or Palm Desert schools, used to be Del Sol Road which is now Bob Hope. And he lived on this Palm Desert side of it, so he went to school with us. And that's about it of the Palm Desert kids. I know there was an awful, awful lot more of them. That was the only people that really pop into my head. Most of these people were Indio.

PY: Did your best friends seem to be people that were in Palm Desert rather than people in Indio?

BK: Yes. Yes, I think basically. Because especially like girls that you met at the high school had all known each other for so many years of growing up together in their neighborhood or whatever that I think the girls did here, too. I remember, you know, the first day we had to go and meet all those people from another school. We were



all just, you know, stayed together because you didn't know anybody else. And you had GAA, Girls Athletic Association. We had a lot of activities like with the yearbook and stuff that you went out, you know, and sold all the ads for the yearbook and this and that. And took the pictures. And the yearbook staff, it was always fun to be on yearbook because you always got sixth period free that you could go do something else, you know, like go sell ads or take pictures or work on something else. So that was always kind of fun. Oh, the Clayburns, Rob Clayburn is still here, and he went to CV. Now he was the one that had a brother in my class, Jimmy. And he's still here.

PY: John Vallat is still around, isn't he?

BK: No. No, he went away to school. I think he just started the college maybe one year, maybe one semester, and then went to San Diego State. And I don't know whether he's still in San Diego or is up north someplace. But he's not around. His parents are still here. But I haven't seen John in years.

PY: Boy, you must have seen a lot of change being at the bookstore at COD now.

BK: Yes. Yes, in comparison. Oh, press clippings in the



back of the yearbook. Yes, a lot of change. Changes, but no changes. And we just keep saying the students are getting younger. We're not getting any older, you know, going. And it's hard. It's been, because I've always been considered, of course, I came to, well, I went to work at COD when I was seventeen. So it's still a lot of years have gone by. Nobody really wants to admit that all those many years have gone by. So it's been good. It's been a good place to work, you know. Had all the advantages of higher education, this and that, around. And the college really was one of the only places that gave a lot of opportunity for people to work when you came in as a secretary, this and that, because there were a lot of, you know, just the school districts and a few private industries around. There are not any real big work forces in the valley at all. Other than probably the water districts and the school districts and a few of the larger companies. But that's all as far as a work force is concerned. So that gave an awful lot of opportunity and a lot of people have been at the college a long time. People who came there to work, an awful lot of them are still there.

PY: Were you impressed with the instructors at all, and was



there enthusiasm amongst the faculty at the start of the college?

BK: Yes, a lot of the instructors had come with Dr. McCall from Modesto. A lot of them, I think, was in about the first three or four or five years that the college was opened. Had the highest amount of doctorates teaching in a junior college as they did anywhere in California, or anywhere in the United States. Because a lot of them were people who had been teaching for years and years and years. And had come down here because of the weather, because of the new college opening and wanting to work there or whatever. And people, I guess, with the doctorates had a larger field of study that they could teach because an English teacher taught American lit, English lit, basic writing, whatever, and they had to have a background well enough because you only had one or two teachers in most of the areas to teach. And they were all fairly close-knit group, too, because it was all such a new thing to them. And the students, you know, you got to know all of them really. You know, they were your teachers, but they weren't kind of thing. And, you know, you'd see them out a lot and this and that kind of thing. And the dean of students always



used to have to go harass everybody because he's putting maps up of where the party was on the weekend. And would you please stop putting those maps up, you know. On the college campus, you know, we're not here promoting, you know, the parties.

PY: The dean of students was putting the maps up?

BK: No, the students were putting the maps up on campus where the party would be for the weekend. And he kept saying, you know, you really shouldn't do that out if you're, you know. College could not really promote parties, the signs we're putting up there. They had a couple which they, oh, that's been within about the last, oh, I don't know, five or six years ago. They had Seals and Croft were at the college. And Ike and Tina Turner. And one other group at the college because there's just really not a lot of places or places to have concerts at this and that here other than getting into all the people of the higher echelon, what they want in the desert area.

PY: Have you noticed that the faculty's changed over the years just in terms of their attitude towards the college? I mean are there as many Ph.D.'s now as there were?



BK: No, and the faculty is much younger now, which can be one of many reasons some of it being money is tighter. It's easier to have someone without as many years experience on a lower pay scale and this and that. I don't know if that's the reason. Some of it was the fact that Dr. McCall was, as we all thought at the time, older than Methuselah anyhow. And have a certain amount of respect for older college instructors, it was the "professor." We didn't have that many women teachers. We still only have one black teaching at the college. The race and minority and the equal rights and stuff has never really played an important part down there per se, you know, of, you know, affirmative action or anything. They want good teachers, you know, regardless of what they are. And I think it's changed. I think all teaching has changed through the years. It's easier. They've been forced into making classes easier in particular areas. And then you get a thing like ADA which keeps the college going for people in class, so if you have a class, you make it too difficult, people are not going to go to class. And they're not going to sign up for it, so the college isn't going to get money. And you've sort of got, I think, a change.



But I think education has changed drastically in the last fifteen years. And I don't think this is any particular case that's any different or any, or the same than anyplace else. And our education has just changed in the last few years, especially in the last five, you know, all over. And there's not the demand, you know, to be here to school, you know, and some of the big colleges, the private colleges, you either do it or you get out because there's nine people waiting to take your place. And here, you know, there isn't that demand or that need of people's time. And energy, you know, here. And there's more, the college lifestyle has changed because a lot of students at COD, that is not their entire life. They either work or they have their own things, so the college life is not what it was, as being a college life per se.

PY: Can you explain that?

BK: Well, you either, there's like, I don't know, basically at college there's two types, two groups of people, the kids who work for a living or the kids who have money and who don't work so they had the money to go spend on whatever they want to do, so they don't spend the time at the college. Like what I was saying, you have a



school dance or something. There's just very few people there because you get the kids from like, you know, the lower valley who really support the college as far as being there and students, but they still, a lot of them are working. There's a lot of people, there's an awful lot, I'd say probably a large percentage of the college people are people who were married, who never finished an education and who are coming back to finish an education. Or a wife who had kids and is now kids old enough that they're in school that she can go to school during the day if she hasn't been forced into working, with inflation the way it is. But we have always had a larger, not full-time students, but a larger body count of students going to night school than we ever had during the day. I mean it got up like in highest enrollments when you'd only have about two or three thousand day students and five or ten thousand night students. But they may only be taking one class, plus they go to an awful lot of the classes that are just personal enrichment type classes that the people in the area take in the arts and the foreign languages and the this and that that were given because it's a place to go have a class like that. Because there's not a lot of



craft centers and this and that and, you know, things in the area for people to take whatever kind of class they want to take.

PY: How did it use to be then? You said it's different and this is what you're describing as now. What did it use to be like?

BK: I don't know how I must have misled you. I'm not sure on the . . .

PY: I thought you were saying that students were different early on when it was smaller.

BK: Oh, yes, just because, I guess probably you came out of high school, so you're life, did kind of center around the college and its activities more than it does now. More people have cars, more people have more money or students have, and their areas have just, their interests are probably more diverse than they were then. Probably in a certain amount of percentages because when you went to school, a lot of it was the kids who didn't want to go away because they didn't know what they were going to do. Or the kids who had to stay herewho had not gotten any kind of college education if it hadn't of been for the college. Or the kids who came to play. But if they came here to play, they still had a lot of



activity around the college community type activity.

Dances, games, basketball, field trips, plays, this kind of thing in the college thing. And when you went to a party, it was the college kids, not necessarily the people that were working that were your age. And I think that's changed. That's what changed now. That the kids, a lot of them have been forced into working or they don't care. They don't have to work, and so they don't. They go home to go play tennis or go play golf or sit by the pool or whatever. And I think the college atmosphere, the college life, has changed from that standpoint.

PY: That makes a lot of sense.

BK: I think a lot of it is a certain amount of economics, you know, through the years. And it's probably been a slight change. And maybe the statistics aren't as bad. It just seems that there has been a change. And I'm pretty sure it's there. Because through the years I probably, I don't know, it could probably be proven differently, but there's probably not been an awful lot of, if you want to label it, middle-class America here. It's either the working people or the very rich or the few that are in business for themselves. And that sort



of, you know, if you can consider that middle class, that's what it is. You know, in the areas.

PY: Did you ever feel there were a lot of retired people around here then?

BK: Yes. And as you get older, you get more aware of it. You weren't too aware before, at least I wasn't, because you didn't come in contact with them really. A lot of people think, you know, now, you know, when you used, when you first got your drivers license, you know, you couldn't it with old people because they went, you know, two miles an hour on the roads. And you were, you know, smart sixteen year old and wanted to speed. And the sightseers. And you get tired of putting up with tourists, you know, when you could go do this and that. And, you know, we still do. People who live here now basically, I don't think you go out during the season. You know, you don't go out to dinner because I can't waste two hours of my time going out and waiting to go out to eat. And, you know, we always used, you know, we went to the drive-ins a lot because they were a lot easier at the drive-ins. If you could, you know, have dinner where everybody was always taking beer into the drive-ins and food and this and that. And it was kind of



like a party at the drive-in. You know, for an activity in the summertime. There weren't that many cars so you could take like pickups or take chairs and sit on the ground and watch the movie. You know, turn all the speakers up and everybody would sit outside at the drive-ins, sort of like an outdoor theatre, but not a drive-in until it got so busy. And a lot of people now, I resent the tourists to a certain extent, but everybody said, well, that's what keeps our city, you know, with money and people coming in. But I think, and they all ~~meet in~~ *NEED a LESSON in Etiquette* They're all so tacky.

PY: Yes, I know. It's still overrun after awhile.

BK: Yes. And it, oh, I guess part of that's growing up, you know, with the smaller amount of people. And you didn't have to wait to do anything. And if you did, you know, you knew all the people. And it was fun. And you just, there weren't the lines. You didn't wait for a lot of stuff. And you went, you know, you went out and did this and that. And didn't have the waiting and the tourists and the roads weren't full of traffic. And, you know, the housing. There were a lot of places to go, you know. In Palm Desert where it's also built up now. It was out in the middle of nowhere, and that's



where we used to go have our parties in the desert, you know, was right practically in town. But it just wasn't a built-up part of town. Or we used to go out and have dune parties. I don't even think the kids today even have dune parties anymore. We always had dune parties. We took all the cars with the dune buggies and four-wheel drives and went out in the middle of the dunes and built a big bonfire. I remember a couple of times of getting busted when everybody would just spread in a hundred directions in the sand dunes to run from the police, you know, kind of thing. But it was all, you know, sure there was always beer and probably hard liquor there, too. But nobody really got obnoxiously drunk because you still had to go home. And everybody, a lot of people worked on the weekends or you had to be, you know, bright eyed to go wherever you were going to go, you know, even if it was to the club the next day. And a lot of that happens or when you have to be in college and everybody goes to beer parties in college, you know. That will never change.

PY: What happened to the club? It doesn't seem to be like it was.

BK: Well, a lot of that changed when they put the golf course



in and it got back to, I think, I guess, maybe to the older people that were there. And it wasn't in all the early years or up until I guess where you became disinterested about the time you got to be a senior in high school. It wasn't what you did. Your life didn't revolve around the club. Plus it was a family situation before that. Then by the time you got in high school, you were doing your own thing more than what your family did. And the activities at the club were always way more family oriented at the time of what you did, even though you were there, you may have been with or without your parents. But it was still kind of a family activity kind of nucleus. You know, or your parents were there. at one end of it having a party, but you were out in the swimming pool and out at the barbecue pit on the other end, but you were still all there together kind of thing. And the water shows and the dinners and the movies. And there was always usually, you stayed there like on Friday night or Saturday night. I guess it was both nights. And had dinner. And, you know, stayed for the movie. You never got out of your bathing suit practically from the day school stopped until it ended because you were just there. But your families were there, too, even



if they worked. And you could go out, go after dinner, you know, your parents or your father or whoever worked. And they'd usually come home for dinner, and then go up there after dinner because that was the social end for a lot of the parents, too. You know, they were there, too. And so you were always there swimming and doing your thing. But they were always around. Kind of pretty much knew. And it changed I think kind of when they put the golf course. There used to be just the little pitch and putt, the little small one. Then when they put in the big golf course, and then they raised the membership and this and that. And it went on for a few years, but then we just kind of became disinterested or had other things to do, I guess. You know, that's why a lot of it changed. And then they changed the management and the staffing and the rules and regulations and stuff up there. You know, you couldn't go to the locker room with your wet bathing suit on and a lot of things, you know, that you always had done before. You know, and running and ripping and tearing. And then you couldn't do that, you know. And the mean lady at the gate who wouldn't let you in.

PY: Were you allowed to walk up there across 111?



BK: I guess we must have at times. I kind of remember being dropped off a lot, but I'm sure we must have been because there wasn't that much traffic. I remember a lot of times then when we were in school that the grade school was just across Portola, and that was all empty lot to there so you could go from school over there. And we all had lockers. And you could keep your bathing suit and stuff in the locker, so you really didn't have to go home. And then your parents would pick you up, you know, at night, you know, after school was out. And because it was a wide area, I think everybody pretty much had babysitters, too. You always went to somebody's house in the real early years after school. A few people, you know, some people worked and some people didn't. And you went to a babysitter because it really was spread out. And, you know, they wanted to know, your parents wanted to know where you were and not out just running around.

PY: What do you mean you went to a babysitter?

BK: Well, we went to somebody's house. That somebody's mother, you know, you were expected and that's where you were after school. Whether it was just either as a paid babysitter or you went to somebody's house because



that's where everybody went after school kind of thing if you didn't, or else you went home or to the club, you know, on special days. And it seems to me for some reason we used to go up there on one or two days a week. Think you were rehearsing for a water shop or doing this and that, that was always on a particular day. And there have been a lot of the kids who worked here whose parents owned businesses and things all, you know, went in after school even from little kids on up to enter their parents' business to stay until they went home.

PY: Do you remember much about Randall Henderson?

BK: No.

PY: Do you have impressions of Cliff in those days around the Shadow Mountain Club?

BK: Not particularly. The only thing really is Cliff is the dog, his big great dane, of just being little kids and the dog seemed so big, you know, when you were little, little. And after that, yes and no, because he was a person, but you like you just didn't come in contact. You always, you know, yes, Mr. Henderson, and hello, but other than that, not really, you know. It was just a person. It was an adult, and that was about it really. You just may have seen him and he was there, but you just didn't have that much of an attitude one way or another



about him. And they had a man by the name of Mr. Steel was there and there was a little small, small little house, and he had electric trains. And had little train shows and this and that. And if the kids were really good, he'd open up the train thing and the guys could play with the trains or girls or whatever. And that part of it. I think you remember the incidents or the particular thing, not the people per se. You know, you remember, and it's probably in, and so many people in and out and through the years there that that kind of, you don't really remember. Just what you kind of think you remember, I think.

PY: Yes.

BK: And the people, when they had it was like, gee, they raised money for a few things. And they had the movies and this and that. And then they had the shows. I remember Edgar Bergen was there a lot with Charlie McCarthy. We all practically grew up with that. And plus going back into those years, you didn't have television as much or as widely as now. So I think that had a certain amount of influence on, you know, people that were doing other things. And plus you still had the celebrity type people who were out doing things on the



road or being places or doing shows way more than you do now, I think, because the money and the economics isn't as an important part of that as it was, or as it is now. You know, in comparison to then.

PY: So you mean you had more people visiting Shadow Mountain Club than shows?

BK: Yes. Yes. Yes. A lot of them because a lot of them lived here, stayed here, and were kind of part of the community to a certain extent. And plus a lot of them were probably hired that we just didn't know about. But they were there doing things. And Edgar Bergen was there quite a bit. And a lot of the tennis people and when it got to be kind of a tennisy thing, too, for awhile. That a lot of big tennis tournaments and Poncho Gonzales, I remember being there. And there was a tennis pro, and I can't remember his name, Vinnie and that he had played quite a bit of tennis and was a tennis coach or something. And they had like a tennis part of it there. And that became more prevalent through the years there because of the courts. And then a lot of people just because of the size of the pool and things, coming to see it and being there. Plus I think an awful lot of it was people that the Hendersons knew



from other areas, in other fields, and the people that when the Firecliff was there, an awful lot of celebrities and stuff came because it was still coming to the desert for the sun and the playing and stuff out Los Angeles. And the different areas, that they came to Palm Springs. A lot of them came to Palm Desert, too, in those years. But it's sort of like it's there, but it's not. You know, you kind of remember. And a lot of the kids were there. And in the early years we used to go trick or treating at Thunderbird when it was allowed and the people. And it was always fun to go there and go trick or treating because they'd invite you in. And it wasn't a thing of, you know, trying to keep everybody out in the private areas. There wasn't that many private areas because nothing was walled off or, you know, guards or anything like they have now. And, you know, you'd see the people in the market and this and that or whatever. And you'd go in the stores, you know, and Frank Sinatra would be in Bullock's, you know, and nobody would think anything about it because he was here. And you can see a lot of people, and you just grew up not thinking that they were anybody really special. They were and they weren't. They were special because they, you know, were



somebody that was doing something or was considered a movie star or something. But you didn't have the impression that you couldn't, you know, go up there and stare at them if you wanted to. (laughter)

PY: *well its necessary*

BK: Yes.

PY: Did you attend, even like in high school, did you ever, or let me put it this way, did the Valley Players or the Art Gallery have any influence on your lives at all?

BK: No. Not really. I got into Valley Players, but that was, oh, only about twelve or thirteen years ago. Just because I happened to know somebody from the college. And went over there, but they had no, not on my life really per se. In the arts, no, there really weren't. They used to have, in CV High School years and years ago, things like concerts, things of a piano player or a particular artsy quote quote, people there. And you had season tickets that I just sort of barely remember that, of going down there and just seeing probably some pretty great people we saw. But at the time we didn't pay any attention to who they were or why, you know. It was just one of the things that your parents would have, you know, you did or when you were in high school,



you went, you know, to them because you had to do a, when you had a reason for that. I remember listening to all the Carmen Dragon records the one Friday afternoon in school that he did through the years for kids. That, you know, to try and get everybody a little interest in the classics. (laughter)

PY: Your mom mentioned to me that they used to spend a lot of time over at Desert Aire, too. Did you ever go with them or was that mainly an adult activity over there?

BK: I think that was mainly an adult. I remember going there to dinner a few times. And you were always kind of fascinated because of the airplanes being there. But not anymore than just sort of knowing it was there. I remember when they started to build the college, there was a lot of <sup>people</sup> ~~who~~ *fought* about the fact that it was over the flight path. And then they did have one plane that went down on the college grounds just about when they were starting to build it, the little private plane. And then everybody really got in a big uproar. And then they went ahead because they had the land for the college. Then not too long after that they closed, you know, Desert Aire to an awful lot of this stuff. And then about that time I think they opened Bermuda Dunes



Airports so that pulled out a lot of people. And you could still, Palm Springs was just a little thatched hut out there. There was no Palm Springs airport per se like it is now either. And that was like a little community airport. And I remember when I was probably a junior or senior in high school and they used to have road races, sports car road races, on the Palm Springs Airport. And that was a big thing, was to go to that. Oh, you're a big kid if you, you know, had a date and could go to the road races. And then there was sports cars. I can't remember now what it was. But that was sort of, you know, the guys activities. They were going to races so, you know, you just went. I mean you accepted that as part of the thing is to go to the races. And we used to go to Riverside to the races a lot. at the Riverside *five hundred* that kind of thing. But as far as being at Desert Air~~e~~, I remember a few things there. But I remember going because you used to be able to get fried chicken with rolls and honey. But that's all really, you know, as far as the activities concerned and all the men.

PY: Did you go to Los Angeles very much in college or in high school? I mean was there much pull to go to the city?



BK: No. Because you really didn't know probably looking back now you really didn't know what the city had to offer, you know, from that standpoint. We really didn't start going in there. You usually went to Newport. It was the thing that if you lived here and the kids came here, you went to Newport in the summer or on your time off because you still wanted to go to the beach area to be, if you didn't want to be home for Easter week or vacations and stuff, you went to the beach. And went to Newport and Balboa for your activities way more than going into Los Angeles. Then you'd start going into L. A. until you started going in, oh, a lot, probably a lot older, you know, after college and this and that and going into plays and shows and whatever. You just didn't go to L. A. You went to L. A. like on your field trips maybe once in awhile. I think I went to one or two, and then I know by the time my brother was in school they went to more, going like to the, oh, scientific museums and the art museums and that kind of thing, but no, not really. And going in, I don't remember going in hardly at all for anything other than that.

PY: I think you've just about answered everything I have



here. Can you think of anything else?

BK: Not really. It's sort of hard, you know. I keep going and I'd probably think of, you know, seven things later.

PY: *Well, jot some down and we'll get* trip together with your whole family, and I'm sure that will bring out a lot more.

BK: There's just, you know, as I said before, a lot of it, you know, you're not sure you totally remember it. It's what you think you remember, too, going back. Because I guess you just really didn't pay attention, you know, all through the years you were just, you know, you did your thing on a day-to-day basis. And from there you didn't, you know, worry about it. And so I think that has a lot to do with it. But, yes, I'll keep a, you know, keep a list or if I think of anything and, you know, try and get a bunch of people together. Might be kind of fun to get some of the, you know, group of the kids or, you know, Gary and Bill and Ken Roberts and a bunch of people together, too. You might be able to concentrate on one particular area even in a more of a particular time or a particular area, like you know, Shadow Mountain Club or school or bus riding or, you know, something by getting some of the people together



all at the same time. It might be kind of fun.

PY: Oh, I think it would be great.

BK: Yes. But it's hard. You know, people have just gotten so involved in those years from, you know, fifteen to thirty of their own lives and stuff that you kind of don't really, you know, don't associate with much of what, you know, what you did then in a way. And but there's a lot of activity done.

PY: Oh, good.

BK: Yes. Just sort of you remember him there. And I . . .

PY: You don't . . . I didn't have it all

BK: Oh, Andy the donkey man that had his donkeys down sort of on the other side of Palm Desert towards Rancho Mirage. And I never was around there too much. I just remember seeing him walking an awful. And you knew that they were there. And I remember one time we were all and so there used to be a kind of a, oh, the closest thing we ever had to a drive-in restaurant over where the Exxon station is in Sandy's. I can't remember what it was called, but it was sort of like what Foster Freeze used to be in the good old days kind of thing. And they had a, Andy had something, he had very bad eyesight and they had a thing there to collect money for glasses



for Andy. And I remember one of the kids decided he was going to break in there and take the money. And everybody almost had a fit because they said, no, you can't do that. You want to take it from, you know, somebody else. The rich people's charities you can, but not for him kind of thing. I just remember that incident because everybody just came unglued to think that one of the kids was going to take some of the money. You know, to buy a hamburger or something out of his thing when he happened. And I remember he had a little cart like a shrunken covered wagon that he kind of lived in. And he was just always out there on the road when it was the old highway that went sort of there by the mountains until they changed it. And then he was sort of out on the corner of 111 and 44 for a long lot of years after the donkey rides. I don't ever really remember riding the donkeys, but I'm sure I must have sometime in the early years. But I don't ever really remember doing it. And I remember going on pony rides someplace, but I think it must have been an activity that was here that had pony rides. (chuckle)

PY: What about some of the older desert artists, you know, that you'd sort of hang out around here?



BK: Nothing. Nothing, really. I remember, and I can't remember her name, somebody that used to live down the street from us when we lived in Palm Village. And I don't remember her name, just because I knew she was an artist at the time. And then the one, my mother has one of his pictures. I want to say Chisum, but I don't think that's . . .

PY: Chisum, Fred Chisum?

BK: No. I can't remember.

PY: John Hilton?

BK: No. Can't remember. Come in, found that after being, going on at college, though, Sterling Moak who taught at the college. And it's more like a Palm Springs artist. But being around, you know, that, that influence. But I don't really remember any, you know, desert artists. The only, I sort of take that back too much, have nothing, no idea even what the man paints, but is called Bray, just because we went to school with his kids and we used to stop and pick them up on the bus between here and there and see his studio. But other than that, that's, you know, that's really all on that standpoint.

PY: Was he sort of like an institution down there?

BK: Acall?



PY: Yes.

BK: I don't really know. I just know that because right at his house happened to be a bus stop for some of the kids that lived, you know, in a few of the houses there. And there was a kind of where his studio is now there was some, oh, little, I guess you'd almost call them apartments there where some kids lived. And I remember it was just a bus stop, and his house used to be kind of, I remember it was bright purple (laughter) and we used to wonder about this funny purple house on the hill. And that the man was an artist. But you never paid too much attention, I mean to that at all.

PY: Wasn't there a schoolhouse in Indian Wells at one point? Was that before you?

BK: Must have been before me. I really don't remember now. I don't remember at all on a schoolhouse there. I don't, if there was, it must have been like a one-room schoolhouse, but a long, long time ago, before they had the school in Palm Desert now, I don't know what they did or whether there were kids here that went to school before they opened Palm Desert school, I don't know.

PY: When did that open? Early fifties?

BK: Yes. Well, I was four or four and a half when I went



to school. So it must have been either in forty-nine or fifty because my birthday is in January. And it was before that law they have now that you have to be five before December or whatever it is. And I started kindergarten in September at four, and didn't turn five until January. And so I would have turned five in January of fifty. So it must have started in the fall of forty-nine, the school started. So now whether there were kids here who went to school, I don't know. If they did, they must have had to go to Indio or Palm Springs, you know, the older kids. Because I think when they opened that pretty much it covered all the ages of the kids who were in Palm Desert. Now why and where and who decided that they needed a school out here in those early days, I don't know. The school system thing, somebody to talk to would be Ewing Robertson who was a teacher there and then became principal. And he probably could give an awful lot more background on the school. Or Mrs. Cable, and I don't remember her first name, who still taught up here up until probably five or six years ago.

PY: How do you spell her name?

BK: C-A-B-L-E. And because I know when she taught there, and I think she taught in Indio. Or now I know June and



Charlie Gibbs that live in Palm Desert taught at CV High School. But I don't know how far back to go on that. I was trying to think who we had in those grade school teachers. I don't really know because I remember my third grade teacher because she was into the Hopi Indians. We had to make a pueblo out adobe. We always came home with that all over us. And dipped red candles. And she died. And then I had Ewing Robertson for my fourth grade teacher and my sixth grade teacher. And then he's still in the Indio school district now. I think he's a principal at one of the schools. So he might be able to fill in more in the school part of what went on. And, oh, we had La Quinta kids went to the Palm Desert school with us, too. Kids that were, lived in La Quinta, came out here to school. And I don't remember why or what the dividing line was. I guess that's about it.

PY: Okay.

END OF INTERVIEW